イブニングKC

BLOOD ALONE 7

高野真之

Masayuki Takano

EVENING KC

講談社

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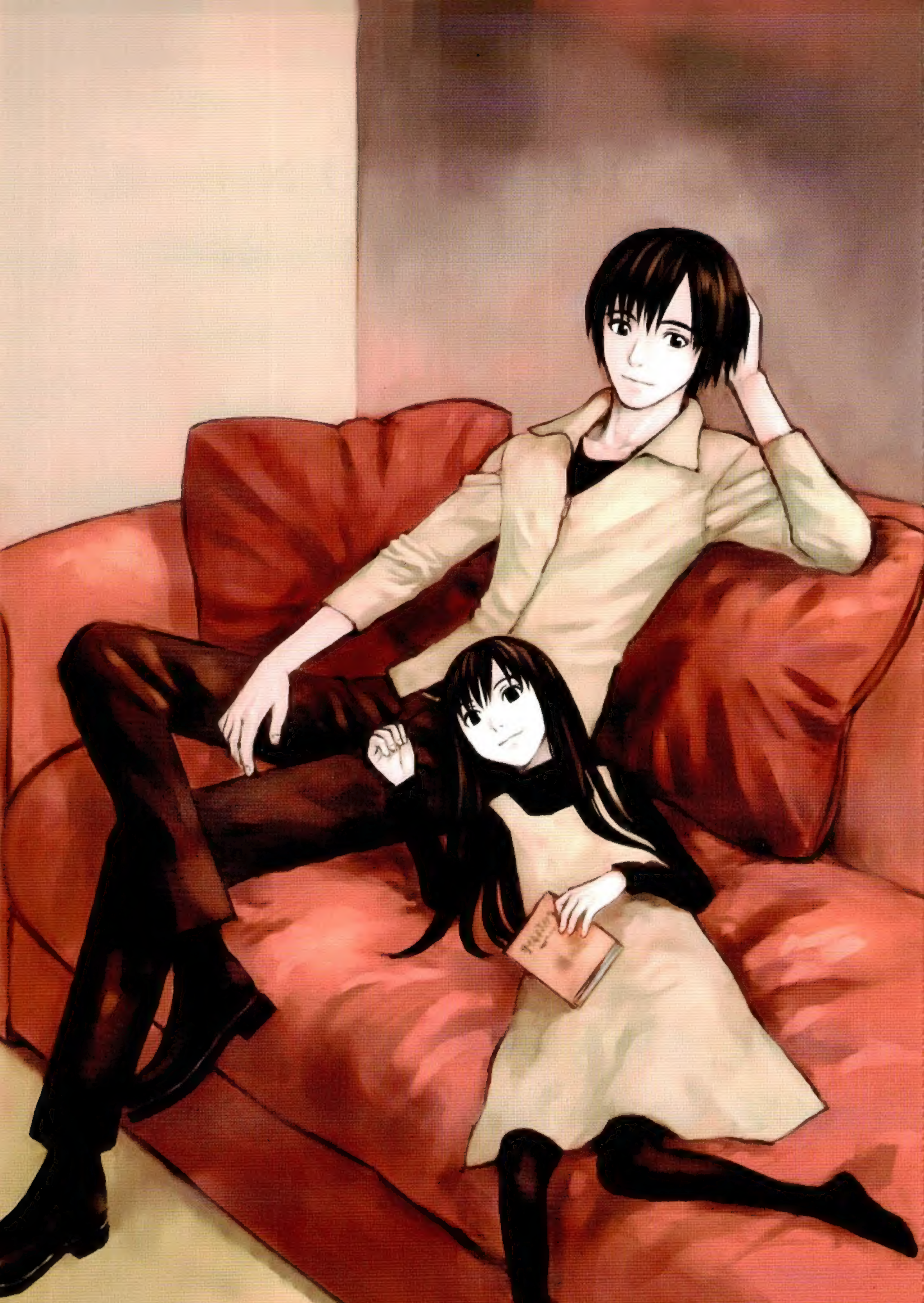

BLOOD ALONE 7

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Um-
Excuse
me.

BLOOD ALONE

You are
Misaki,
just like I
thought.

Ah...

I brought someone interesting!

Kuroe!!

Ta-Da!!

...
Johnny ...?

Kuroe ...

Hey,

A lot happened.

Well...

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, JOHNNY!!

WHY ARE YOU IN JAPAN!?

I didn't change at all.

That's not true.

In any case, Misaki, you sure became more like an adult since the last time I saw you.

I couldn't recognize you at first.

You used to be cute, but now you're also beautiful.

It's more like you are displaying some inner beauty.

That's not what I'm saying.

ハー

What are you saying?

クス

クス

I can tell because I haven't seen you in a while.

No, it's true.

...At any rate, how is Jessie doing?

.....

Although people near you probably don't realize it.

Well... fine, I guess.

.....

Ah... My sister, huh?

Kuroe just changed the subject in an unnatural way...

Huh...?

...Oi.

If I were you, I would never let go of a girl like her.

...But rather than that, I want to talk about Misaki.

I'm happy that I get to see her again.

It's fine, isn't it? I haven't seen her in a while.

.....

ちら、

.....

...Could Kuroe be jealous?

I know, right?

...It's also true that Johnny has become a wonderful man since the last time I saw him.

Well, I'm different from before.

Yeah--

...I wonder. You still have some childishness left in you.

Hm... I wonder if I should smooth-talk myself into staying here ...

Would you like to stay here?

What are you going to do today, Jonny?

.....

EH!?

I'll sleep elsewhere today.

DON'T TELL ME, YOU'RE GOING TO JOHNNY'S —

WELL ...

AH... YOU'RE RIGHT.

He'll think it's weird if I sleep with you.

What are you talking about? I'm going to my own room, of course.

AH... YEAH, GOOD NIGHT.

Good night.

...!!

Can I talk to you for a bit...?

Kuroe ...

A... ACTUALLY, I---

What are you talking about?

...?

WA... WAIT!! MISAKI IS OFF-LIMITS!

IT'S STILL TOO---

?

IT'S JUST
...

ACTUALLY...
I HAD A BIG FIGHT
WITH JESSIE...

YEAH...

You
wanted
to consult
me?

THAT'S
BECAUSE
...

But
how come...?
You two were
so close.

I thought it
was strange
...

Why did you choose a human who is so different from you?

I don't understand, Sophia.

I'm thinking the same thing...

...But it's the first time I feel this way...

Cause a fight...

That would indeed ---

Yeah.

YOUR LOVER IS A VAMPIRE !?

But as a vampire, I feel responsible.

That's true ...

...But it has nothing to do with you, right?

Both of his parents were killed by us vampires...

It's only natural that she would think of us vampires as monsters.

Also, his sister was strongly against our relationship.

This is Sophia ---

AND SHE ALSO HAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH SPARUDA.

IT'S FINE AS LONG AS SHE DOESN'T TURN EVIL.

SHE HAS LIVED MANY TIMES MY LIFESPAN.

WHY NOT!?

WELL... UM... IT SEEMS LIKE.. BESIDES THE FACT THAT SHE'S A VAMPIRE... THERE ARE ALSO... OTHER PROBLEMS ...

She has simply suppressed her loneliness throughout the years.

EH...!?

BECAUSE OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MISAKI.

YOU WOULD UNDERSTAND, RIGHT?

...WAIT A SECOND, WE DON'T REALLY HAVE THAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP ---

WHAT WOULD IT BE, IF YOU'RE NOT LOVERS!?

THEN WHAT KIND IS IT?

HUH...?

AND YOU CLAIM TO NOT BE LOVERS!?

YOU'RE NEITHER SIBLINGS NOR FATHER AND DAUGHTER, YET YOU TWO LIVE TOGETHER LIKE THIS---

THAT IS ---

RESPONSIBILITY...!? IS THAT ALL? ARE YOU SURE THAT'S ALL!?

I... HAVE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FACT THAT MISAKI TURNED INTO A VAMPIRE ---

IT WON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE... EVEN IF I SAY ANYTHING---

I was thinking that maybe you could try to convince Jessie...

WHAT WILL YOU DO... FROM NOW ON?

BESIDES JESSIE, THERE'S ALSO THE PROBLEM OF BEING A VAMPIRE...

...I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT AFTER ALL...

There won't be any problems.

I'VE ALREADY PREPARED MYSELF!! AS LONG AS I'M WITH HER, I'M WILLING GO ANYWHERE!!

.....

HIGURE...?

Although she did say that she was a distant relative of a vampire... whose name was Higure or something---

...She's in Japan with me...

...Where is your girlfriend right now?

Since it's forbidden love...

...This won't work after all...

THAT'S NOT TRUE!!

JOHNNY ...

BUT---

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE I WANT!!

FOR YOUR SAKE--- IN ORDER FOR ME TO BE TOGETHER WITH YOU,

I'LL BECOME YOUR RENFIELD!!

I LOVE YOU!!

---!

...ME TOO.

……

……

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CLEANER: MOLENIR
TYPESETTER: NICRSSO

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Holing away in a hotel, you sure are like a writer.

I just need to bring it to you, right?

Got it.

Then I'll leave it to you.

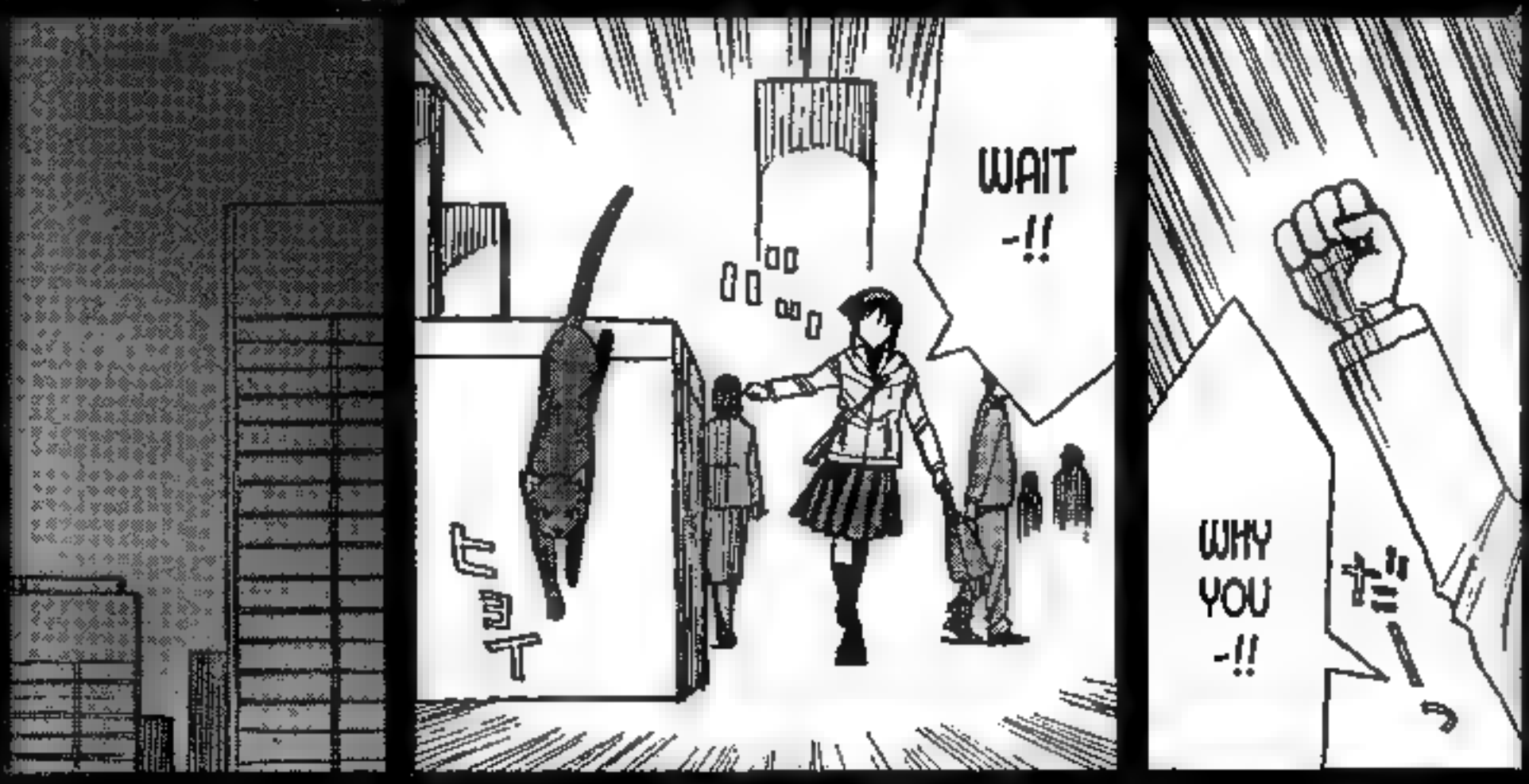
...I really am a writer.

BLOOD ALONE

Here here here.

Larry ...?

...He's so hard to please...
Ah...!!!


WAIT -!!
WHY YOU -!!

...
She's late.

I've lost sight of him ...

HAH.

HAH.

Huh ...?

He's so quick, as usual...

I don't have... Kuroe's package!?

Ah...

WAIT... WHY DO YOU HAVE IT---!?

She's taking too long ...

It's strange after all...

That was a hard battle ...

HUFF.

HUFF.

...
Oh.

I don't have the time for something like this.

I WILL REALLY BEAT YOU UP NEXT TIME!!

YOU BETTER REMEMBER IT!!

ドドドドド

ドドドドド

ドドドドド

TN: TYPICAL JAPANESE DOORBELL SFX.

But that shouldn't be the case...

Is he not here?

Hm...?

PIN PoONG.

Maybe he's resting in the lobby.

I even looked in the station, but she's nowhere to be found...

It doesn't look like he's anywhere around here...

Hm...

I forgot ..... it...

Cellphone, cellphone...

Ah.

R ||||G
...

RI|| ||G.

Could she have been in an accident ---!?

She's not picking up either...

.....

カ"
|
ｻﾞ

I don't think he would go out...

Hm ...

Even though he's isolating himself ...

I wonder if he's taking a nap...

Misaki -chan.

...He's not here after all ...

PIN POONG.

Are you out on an errand?

Good evening.

Ah...!! Matsuda -san.

It seems like he's not in...

I would have finished, but...

I'll bring the key.

Wait a little bit,

Yes ...

Ah...is sensei not there?

TN: WRITERS ARE REFERRED TO AS SENSEI.

Well, she didn't come this way.

YEAH, DID YOU HAPPEN TO SEE HER!?

MISAK ?

...

larry, do you know some-thing?

|...| SEE

Doesn't seem like it.

IF YOU SEE HER, PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

?

So he really is not here.

Ah...

I'll warn him next time.

This isn't good, there's no time...

That Kuroe, even though that's exactly why he sent me on an errand.

I wonder if he went shopping?

Ah!

MISAKI ...!!

Kuroe, don't run away like that.

Eh?

That's right sensei, you barely have any time left.

I'm sorry ...

A... ah.

?? ?

I'll watch him closely this time.

Then, I'll be going back to the company. Please do your work properly.

OK!!

I'll leave it to you, Misaki -chan.

.....

I was worried about you.

That's not the problem

But being late for an hour or two is not a big deal--

Then what is the problem?

THAT'S--

.....

YOU'RE NEITHER SIBLINGS NOR PARENT AND CHILD.

IF YOU'RE NOT LOVERS, THEN WHAT ARE YOU!?

I will cheer you on like this.

It's still too early for bed though.

I'm so tired from running around.

Is that the only reason ---?

Is it because she was left in my care---?

Work,
work.

Alright.

Well then, we have your manuscript. Good work.

yeah.

...Speaking of which, is Misaki chan still there?

.....

Just as I thought, rather than being alone, sensei works much better when Misaki-chan is around.

ZZZ

Well
...

I wonder
...

THAT AGAIN?

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Episode 32

Private Eyes

Oh, I was just thinking about how I should end the current novel...
What's wrong?
Ah ...
What should I do...?
Rather than being expected to write them, I think happy endings rather suit your stories.
I'm expected to write happy endings ...
I think I'll think about it while taking a bath...
Hm ...
Is that so...

Oh, I was just thinking about how I should end the current novel...

What's wrong?

What should I do...?

Ah ...

Rather than being expected to write them, I think happy endings rather suit your stories.

I'm expected to write happy endings ...

I think I'll think about it while taking a bath...

Hm ...

Is that so...

VIBRATES
...Kuroe's cell phone.
トルルルル...
パタン
ちら
.....
What's wrong with being a female detective?
... What a thing to say.
JUDGING FROM THE NAME KUROE, I KNEW IT WAS NO GOOD..
AH.. SO YOU'RE A FEMALE DETECTIVE AFTER ALL... DAMN.
HMPH.
Hello?

VIBRATE

...Kuroe's cell phone.

トルルルル

ピッ

……

What's wrong with being a female detective?

...What a thing to say.

Judging from the name Kuroe, I knew it was no good...

Ah...so you're a female detective after all... damn.

Hmph.

Hello?

Well--- What I need help with is...

What's up with you?

How would I know anything if you don't tell me?

.....

...No, I guess I can't just tell anyone after al...

...Then, at the Gulf South Line ...

...That's right.

Didn't you call me because you needed my powers?

ugh

What's with that outfit?

.....

Um...I'm going out for a bit.

I'll be leaving now.

ゴゴゴ

Wait a second.

Here.

.....

Huh? ...oh.

Your tie is crooked.

ゴ
オ
オ
オ

Are you Asakura?

Hi.

Ah ...

Yes.

Are you... Kuroe?

I'll have you know that I'm a very capable detective.

How rude.

THE GODS SURE HAVE GIVEN UP ON ME.

NOT ONLY A FEMALE, BUT ALSO A CHILD...

WHAT THE HECK ...

No, it's fine ...

Would you like to test it out?

Th-that's right.

I also heard you are a master of martial arts...

SIGH

.....

You called me because of some trouble, right? I will help you out significantly.

What is it? Why don't you just try telling me about it?

...Recently, a girl that I know has been acting strange...

She is associating with a weird man,

and going in and out of shady places---

If it's about drugs, that's not what I specialize in

Go to the police for that.

A... ANYWAY, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.

AH... BUT YOU PROBABLY WON'T BELIEVE ME...

NO, IT'S SOMETHING MORE STRANGE THAN THAT---

BEEP

... What's this?

AH ...

FLASH

I see.

Yeah... I'm a gravure photographer ...

Work?

N-no... this is not it.

It's a file for my work---

OK, IT'S THIS.

It's this man who...

...This man is a vampire ...

YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM ...!?

I'm a specialist in that area.

I said that he's a vampire.

Y...

JUST NOW, WHAT DID YOU---!?

HUH ....!?

Yes...
...You've been very hesitant about the whole thing for a while now.

A...ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT...!?

YEAH, THAT'S IT!!

Isn't that because you also think so?

FLIP

OH BUT... VAMPIRES SHOULDN'T REALLY EXIST, RIGHT!?

But the more I think about it ---

...I couldn't believe it at first ...

Wait a second; I'll try asking an acquaintance of mine.

I see, thank you.

They are outlaws within the vampire society.

Wh... where did you---!?

Then he must be an Orphan.

Orphan?

?

If the man is not part of *HIS* blood family ...

I'm a specialist in this area.

Didn't I tell you?

Anyway, take me to the place where he appears frequently.

There's no need to worry.

Is... is that so?

She won't become a vampire by just having her blood sucked.

She will only become a vampire when there is an exchange of blood.

Although if she loses a fatal amount, she'll become an undead...

It would be nice if she wasn't made into a Renfield...

DAMN IT...WHAT THE HELL!?

I think she is only charmed and used as a source of feeding for him.

Is this the place?

Yeah.

AH!!

He appears often ---

That's him ...!!

He's going inside the building...

What are you planning to do?

We're in luck.

HUH... WHA...!?

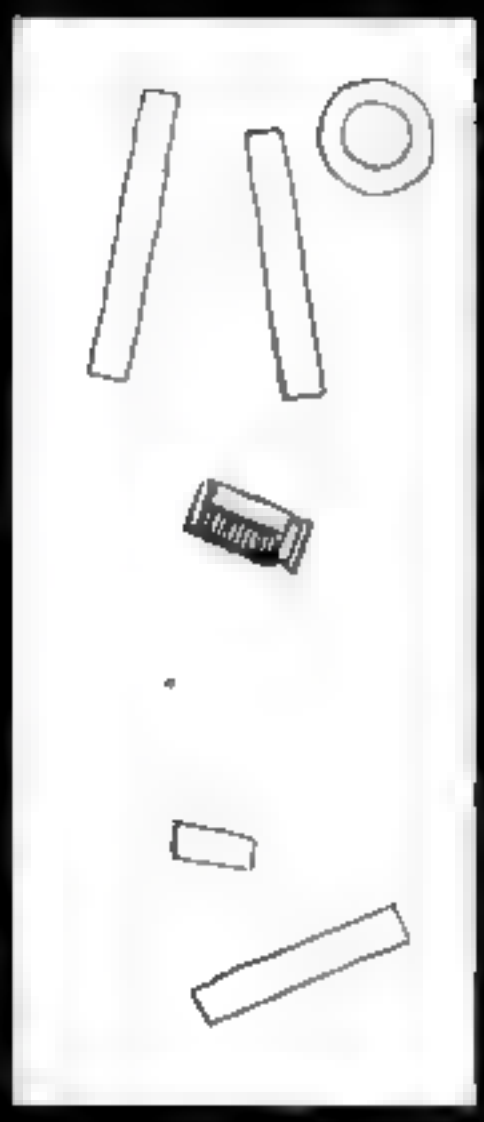
Quickly get in, and advise him to not hurt that girl.

Hey, you vampire!!

KUROE ...!!

KYAH ...!!

Hm...



...
ASAKURA!!

ガクッ

KUROE ...

ARE YOU OK!?

Hmph.

I'LL BE BACK SOON!!

BUT ---

FORGET ME AND GO AFTER HIM...!!

OR HE'LL GET AWAY...!!

HURRY!!

I must be losing my touch if a brat like this can track me down...

...
Geez.

D...

... What did you say?

!!

I'M A STRONGER VAMPIRE THAN YOU ARE!!

DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE ME JUST BECAUSE I'M A LITTLE GIRL!

Hmph...I thought you were just a brave brat, but now I see...

I TOLD YOU, DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ME!!

Even though we're the same, that's still reckless.

Hahana, a detective who challenges a vampire with a wooden stick.

Where did you hear about me?

Interesting ...it's been a while since I've met a fellow vampire.

I...I'M AN EXCELLENT DETECTIVE, YOU ORPHAN!!

H... HOW DARE YOU!!

Are nothing more than puppies to me, young lady.

Little girl vampires with no Aruta,

TN: ARUTA IS THE SPECIAL POWERS POSSESSED BY ELDER VAMPIRES.

Hmph... I guess Absorbire once in a while is OK.

TN: ABSORBIRE IS EQUIVALENT TO VAMPIRE CANNIBALISM.

Kuroe ---!!

.....

Huh ...?

.....

トン

GYAH ...!

Kuroe ...!?

Are you alright, Misaki?

Through the GPS on your cellphone.

I knew it was something like this.

How ...!?

Geez ...

AH...!?

BECAUSE KUROE'S STORIES ALWAYS HAVE HAPPY ENDINGS!!

HOLD ON, YOU CAN'T DIE!!

OOF ...

YOU'RE NOT!!

IT'S...NO GOOD, KUROE ...I'M ALREADY BLEEDING SO MUCH...

HUH ...?

YOU'RE NOT BLEEDING!!

AH...

THE BULLET ---

WHA ...T?

TH...

THEN THIS GIRL IS---!?

Sorry for causing you all that trouble.

Kuroe would actually be me.

HUH...?

TEST

MISAKI... CHAN?

My real name is Misaki, and not Kuroe.

Sorry that I lied to you.

How about if I charge you nothing for the overhead expenses and the commission fee?

In order to make up for the trouble,

IN THE END, YOU DID SOLVE THE CASE FOR ME, SO...

AH... NO---

Y... YEAH.

It was nice doing business with you.

Hey ---

Misaki-chan.

Ah ...

...Then, we will be excusing ourselves now.

You should... become a model.

...But there's a big hurdle.

I'll think about it.

A model for a gravure photographer?

He's not a bad person.

Absolutely not!!

...You see?

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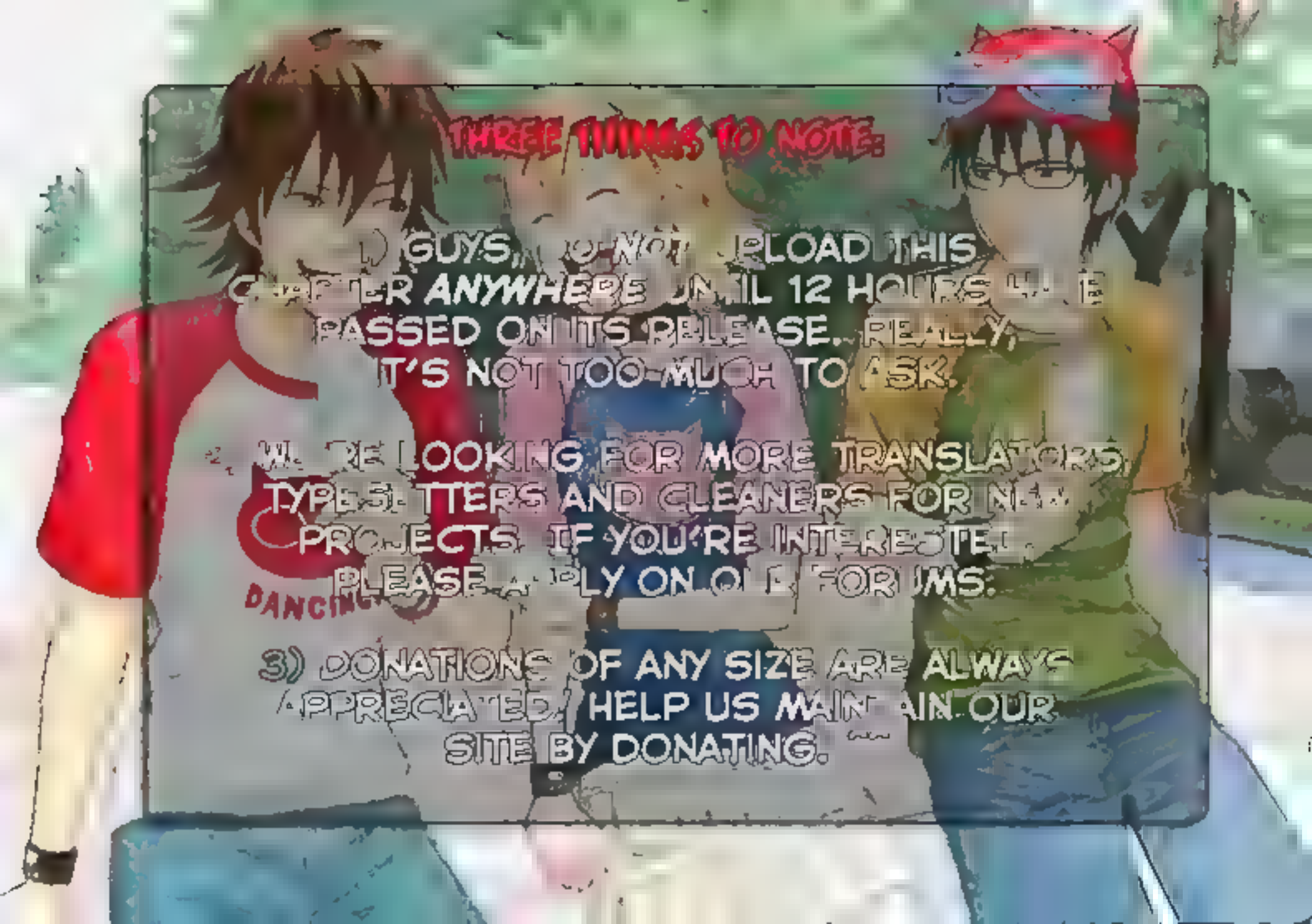

THREE THINGS TO NOTE:
1) GUYS, DO NOT UPLOAD THIS CHAPTER ANYWHERE UNTIL 12 HOURS HAVE PASSED ON ITS RELEASE. REALLY, IT'S NOT TOO MUCH TO ASK.
2) WE'RE LOOKING FOR MORE TRANSLATORS, TYPESETTERS AND CLEANERS FOR NEW PROJECTS. IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, PLEASE APPLY ON OUR FORUMS.
3) DONATIONS OF ANY SIZE ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED. HELP US MAINTAIN OUR SITE BY DONATING.
DANCING

Episode 33

I'll Be Standing By

It says that she's currently a high school student.
Wow, this girl is pretty amazing.

Which one...?
This.

You're up early today.
Hm?

First prize for the Fumizuki Novel Award, huh...

• 柊メイ

• 柊メイ

...Now that I think about it, you've won the same prize before, right?

Alright, I'll be out for a little while.

I won't be back too late.

Take care.

Yeah ...

Although that was a long time ago.

...It's all thanks to you, Kashiwagi-sensei, that I was able to continue writing.

...I just happened to be a member of the selection committee at your debut, and nothing more.

No, it's due to your own abilities... That's how you were able to write on.

...Thank you very much.

I believe that your work is still among the top 3 masterpieces, even after 10 years.

Although the fact that you disappeared immediately after receiving the award came as a shock...

Since I'm both surprised and pleased by your return ...

I won't ask you where you were and what you have been doing ...

.....

It's been 10 years, huh...

...

Yes.

...And it appears that you have had some difficult experiences.

.....

...However, if you don't mind my criticism, your recent works have certainly been somewhat lacking.

I don't believe that your career has ended with just one major work.

You need to balance out the things that you have lost, and those that you have gained.

IS IT TRUE THAT KUROSE-SENSEI IS COMING!?

ガチャ

ガチャ

You're showing bad manners.

That's not good, Mei.

!!

This is my daughter, Mei... Your first meeting, I think?

HIIRAGI ...MEI-SAN?

NICE TO MEET YOU, KUROSE-SENSEI...!!

NA ...

AH...

But I'm really surprised.

I didn't think that Kashiwagi-sensei's daughter would become a novelist.

I see.

I hate it when people say that I'm influenced by my father, so I kept it a secret.

BUT PUTTING THAT ASIDE, KUROSE-SENSEI!! I DECIDED TO BECOME A NOVELIST AFTER READING YOUR DEBUT WORK!!

No, no, that's the result of your own hard work and talent ...

SO IT'S NOT UNREASONABLE TO SAY THAT MY AWARD IS ALL THANKS TO YOU---!!

... Here you are.

CLINK

Thank you, little miss.

.....

Hey.

HUH!?

Sensei, she's not your child, is she!?

It must be hard to take care of such a small child!!

CLANK

Ah!! So she's the daughter of a relative!?

OF COURSE NOT.

AH... NO.

AH...
NO---

.....

Daughter of your former teacher ---?

?

MISAKI IS THE DAUGHTER OF MY FORMER TEACHER ---

HOW SHOULD I PUT IT...UM ---

Misaki, you're coming too, right?

HUH?

Y... YEAH.

To the dinner with Kashiwagi-sensei and his daughter.

.....

Night.
Good night.

The daughter of his former teacher?

Since you're nothing more to him than the daughter of his teacher.

ピク

But don't you think that you're a really big burden on Kurose-sensei?

Is that why he has no choice but to look after you?

Ki.

Saki.

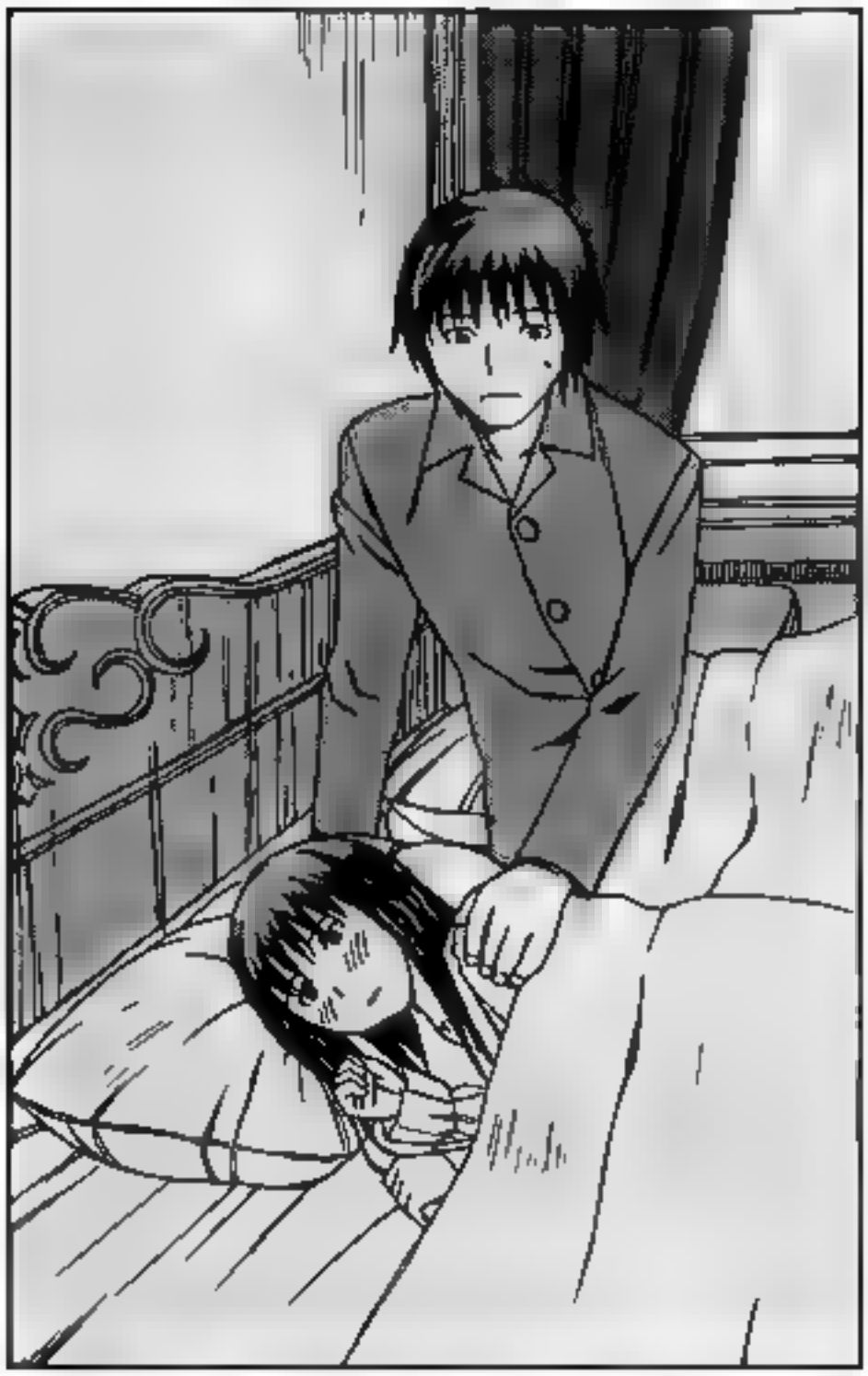
But

ｽﾞﾛ

ｷ

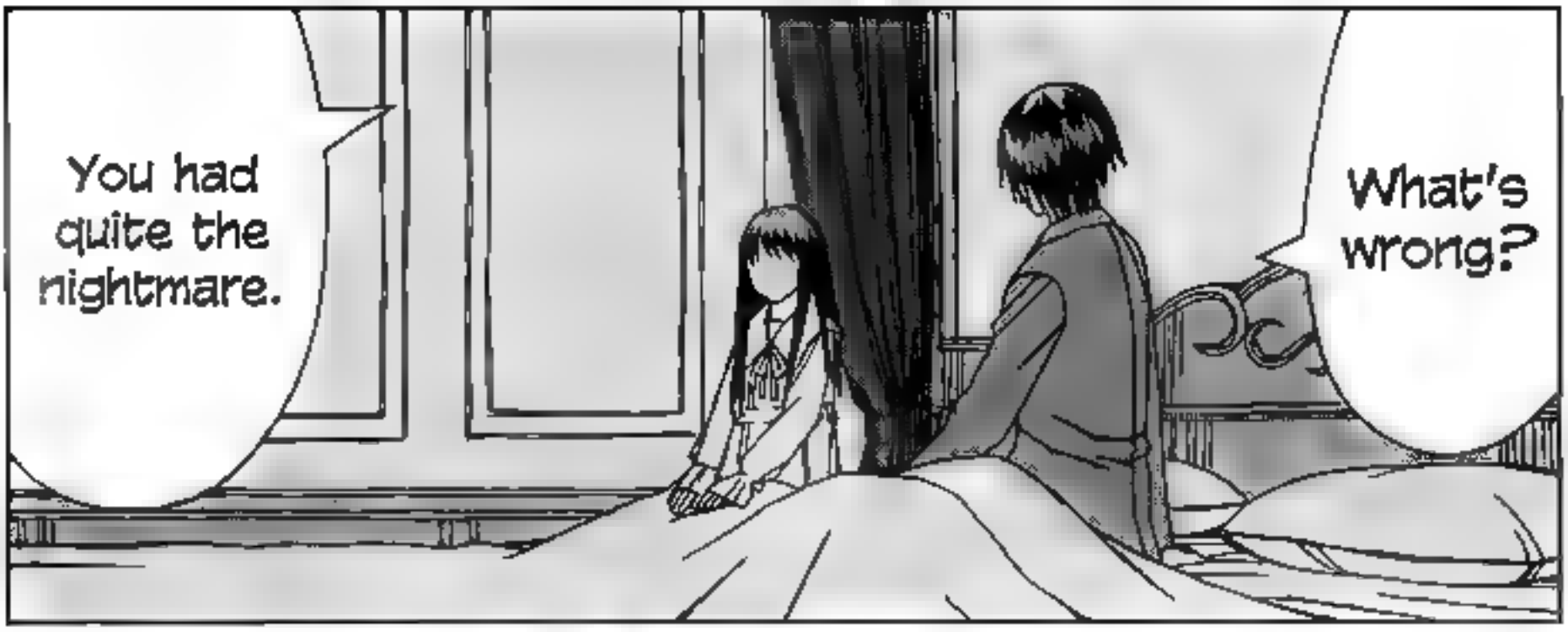
And don't you have any thoughts about being a burden to him?

I don't think he is obligated to take the responsi-bility...



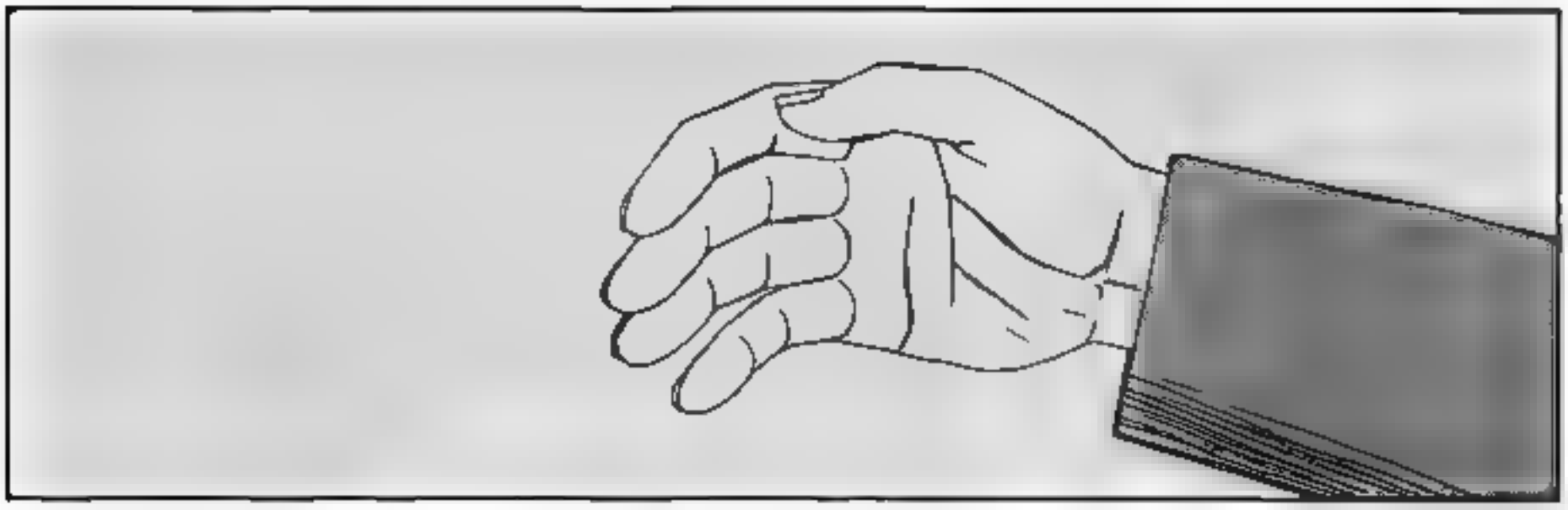
Are
you
ok?

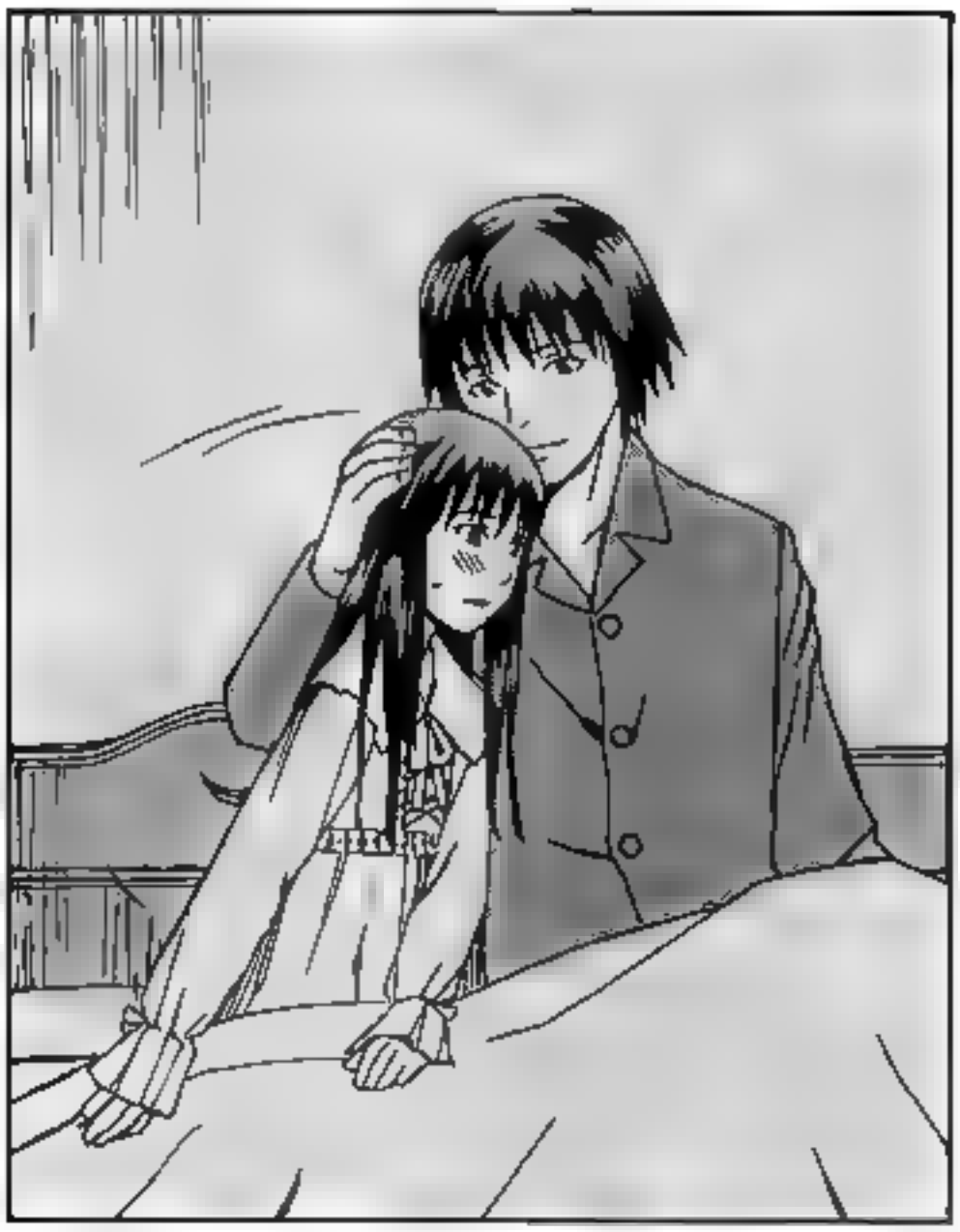
MISAKI!!

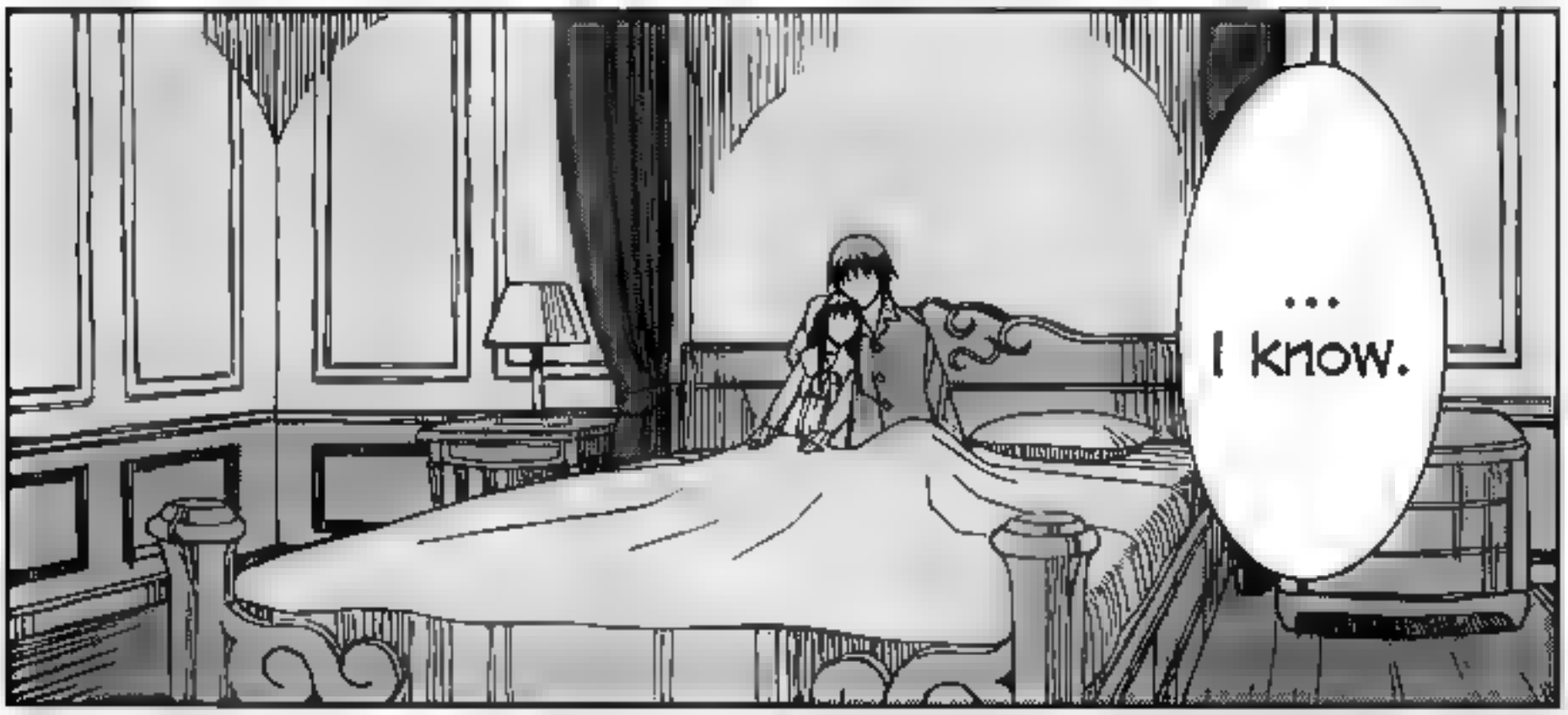

You had quite the nightmare.
What's wrong?

.....

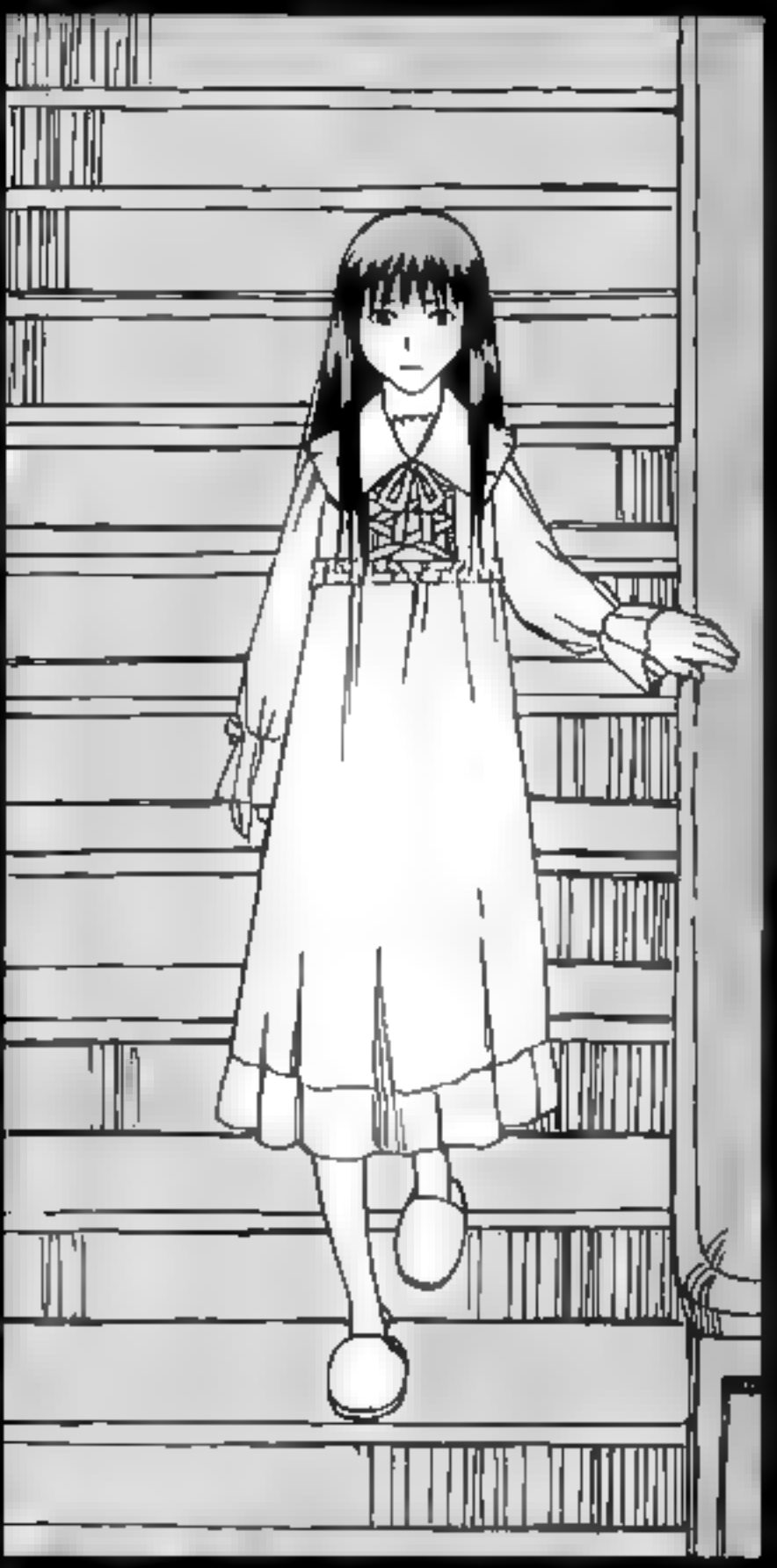
No...it's nothing ...

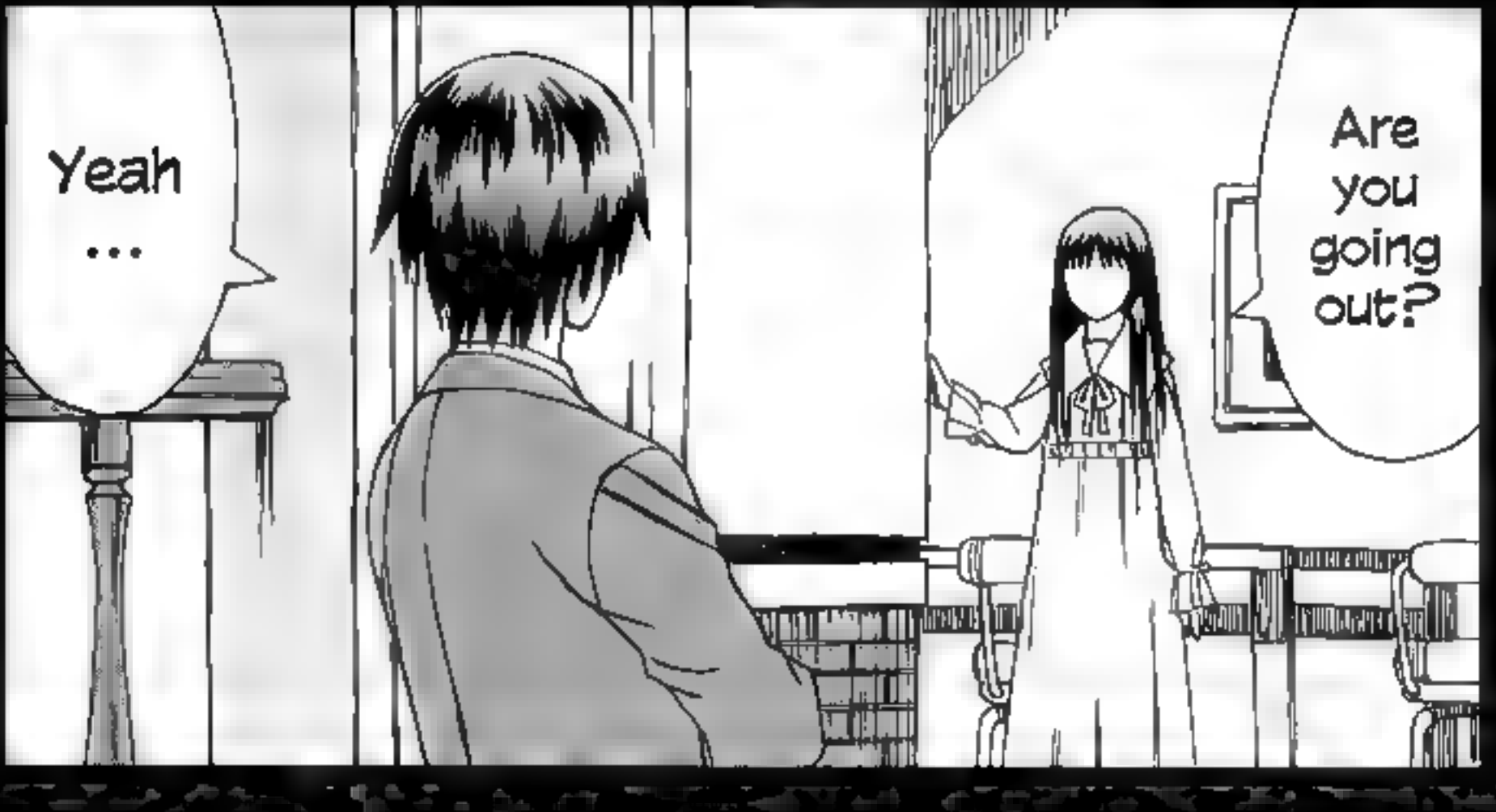





...
I know.

...
I know.




Yeah
...
Are you going out?

I'm going to respectfully decline Kashiwagi-sensei's dinner invitation.

IF IT'S ABOUT ME---

AH ...

But that seems a bit...

I could do it on the phone,

うーん

Huh ...?

...
It's very important to me.

This relation-ship I have with you.

You are, after all, my precious little princess.

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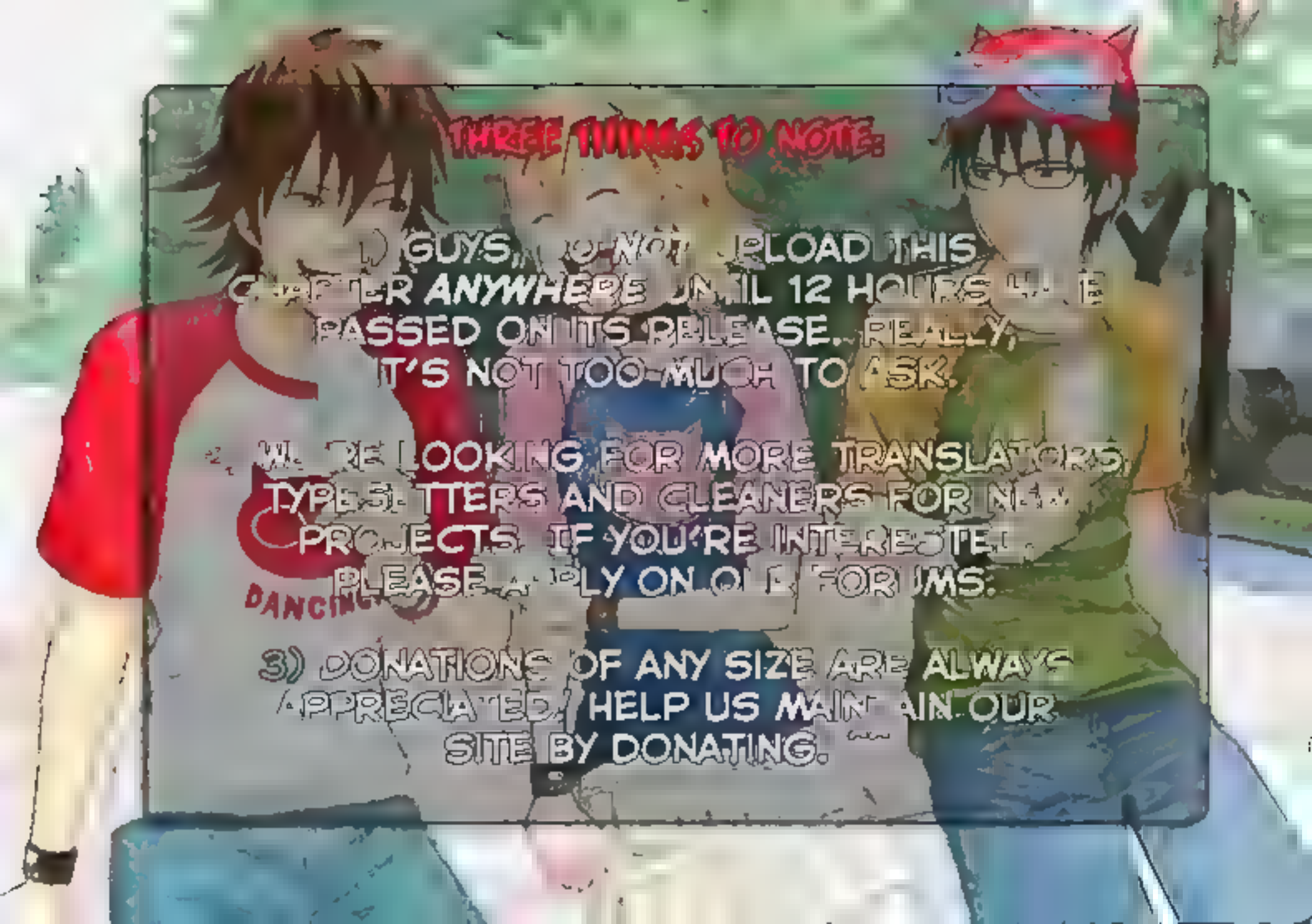
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DANCING

Episode 34

Fight For Your Mind Part 1

Hah!

Hah!

Hah!

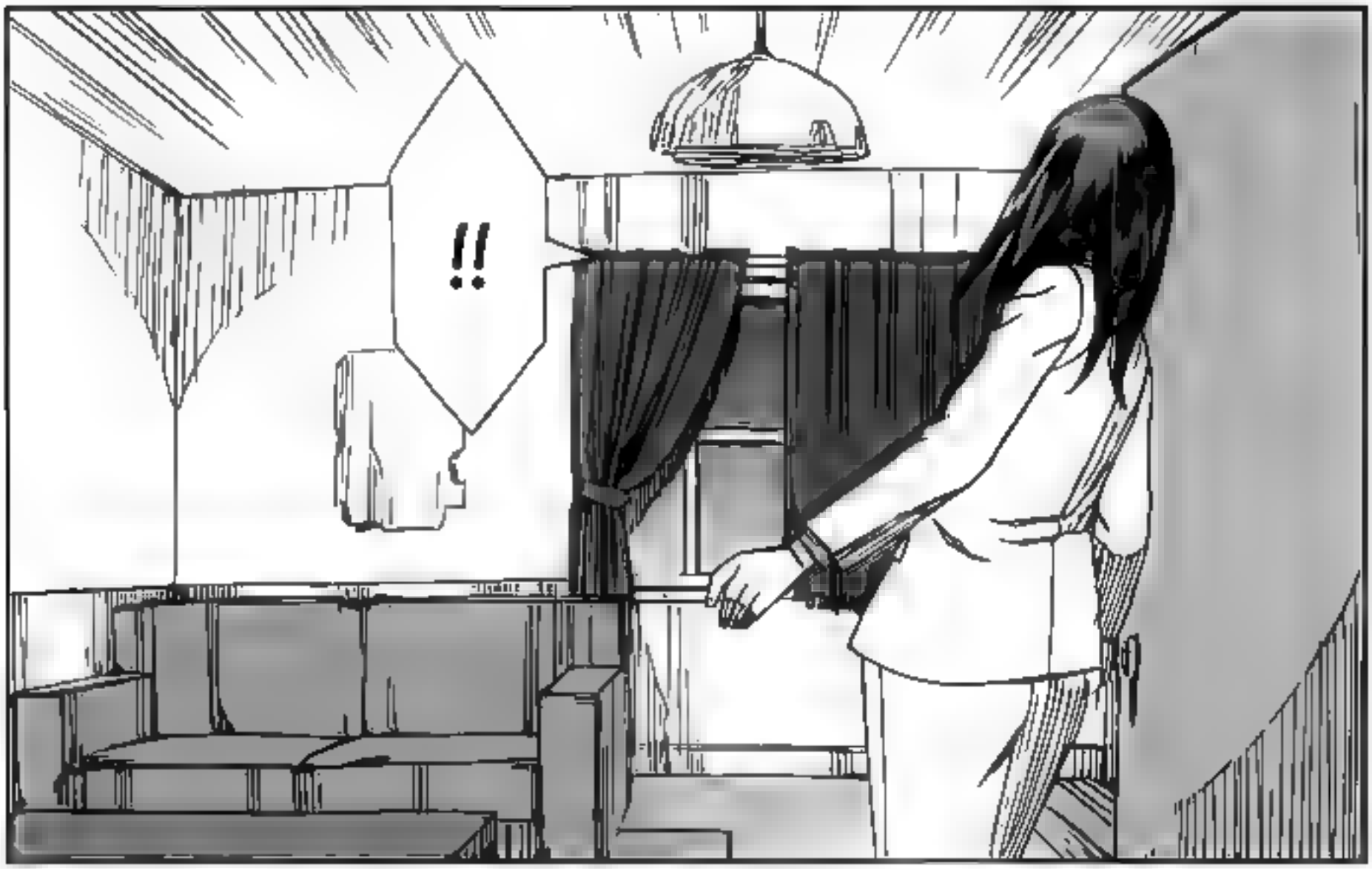
HAH ...!

HAH ...!

...It's useless.

!!

You can't run from this room.


!!

HAH.

I didn't want to have to do this,
HAH.
You should just accept your bad luck and give up ...

Didn't I just tell you? It's useless ...

ZIRRAIL

SENDER : SAINOME

Sainome ...?

SENDER : SAINOME

I NEED TO SEE YOU NOW.

I WILL BE WAITING AT WEST COAST'S THIRD PARK.

What could it be...?

.....

She's still not here yet?

.....

Sainome ...?

ARE YOU KUROSE KUROE!?

Where is Sainome?

?

A man ...?

...What are you saying?

DO YOU KNOW HER!?

.....

THROW ME YOUR ID!!

DON'T TRY ANYTHING FUNNY!!

.....

!?

WHA ...!?

Who are you?

.....

I thought that was the case.

So you're with the police...

...

WHY IS THAT?

...SO YOU REALLY ARE A DETECTIVE?

Didn't I show you my ID just now?

Anyone else would have pointed a gun at me and made me drive.

...In addition, there's the fact that you're driving the car yourself.

You wouldn't have asked for an ID.

If you wanted a fight,

You only showed me your ID, but nothing to prove that you're with the police.

Aren't you the suspicious one?

YOU DID, BUT ---

My eyes can see through any kind of deceit.

And I have collaborated in investigations before, so there should be at least some data on me.

If you still suspect me, then look me up. It should be easy enough for an officer.

ARE YOU REALLY SAINOME-SAN'S---

.....

.....

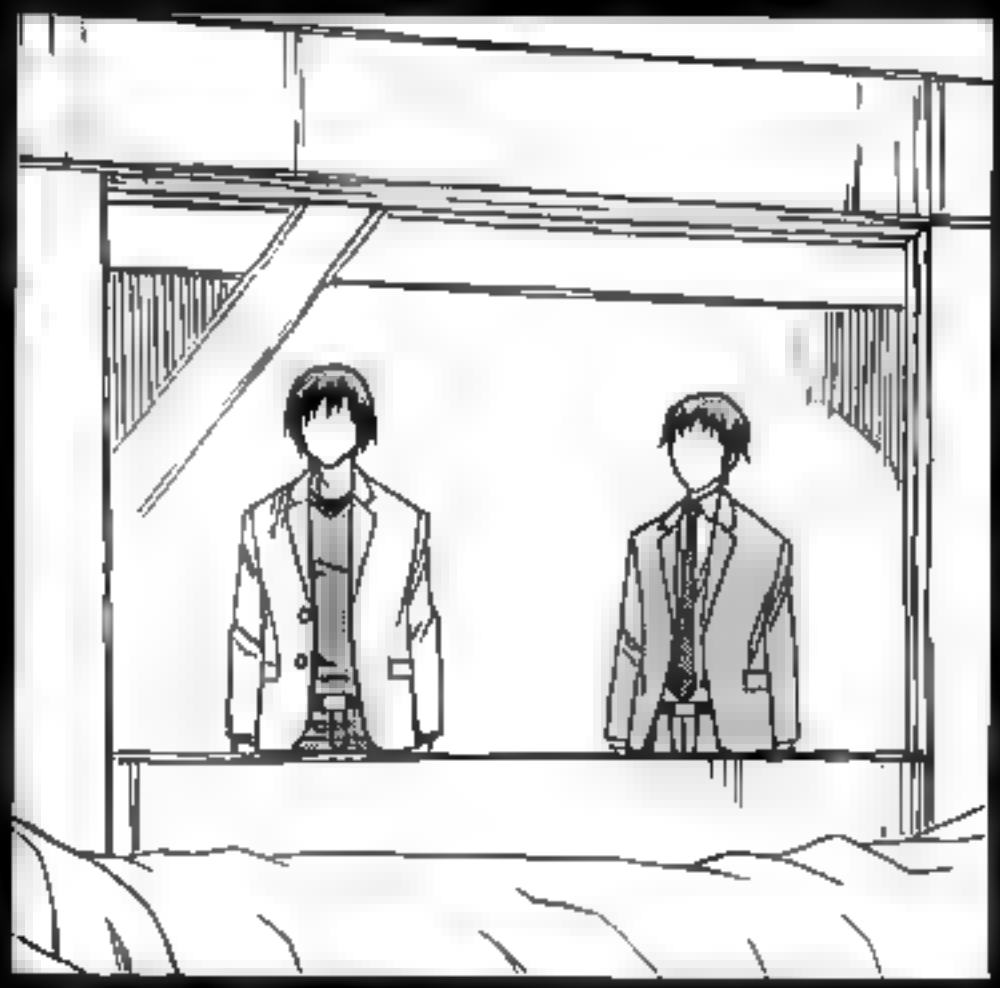
...That aside, what happened to Sainome?

THIS IS NOT HER WILL ...

.....

Why are you doing this?

RIGHT NOW, SAINOME-SAN IS---



.....

Her condition is stable right now, but she wouldn't wake up.

She was seeing the memory of the deceased?

But wait... even if I tell you this...

During our investigation---

Didn't I tell you that we've known each other for a long time?

..YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT!?

!!

...What happened?

.....

...This is the memo that Sainome-san left while she was going through the memory.

TN: THE PAPER SAYS "GET HELP FROM KUROSE KUROE".

...And that's how you contacted me?

Yeah.

It has your name and address written on it.

Still, what an invitation that you set up.

I WAS TRYING TO BE CAUT-IOUS.

Oh well. I would have done the same.

...Okita-kun, any progress?

Shinjou-san---

Who is that?

Hm ...

I'm sorry...I regret to say that nothing has---

I see... It would be nice if you can lead us to some clues...

He appeared in Sainome-san's memo.

Yes sir.

---Well then, carry on with your investiga-tion.

He's so young.

He is our acting section chief.

He's your boss?

.....

...You probably wouldn't understand even if I tell you, but we are---

Unlike a section chief, he's just a boss.

It's in name only...

Metropolitan Police Department Public Welfare Section 6, Supernatural Phenomenon Squad---right?

AND SHE SOMETIMES DOES SCOUTING ---

W-WE LOOK TO SAINOME-SAN FOR HELP..

AH ...

And why Sainome from NRIPS?

HOW ...?!

TN: NRIPS = NATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF POLICE SCIENCE.

I see...It's kind of the same in Sainome's department. Fierce competition is inevitable I suppose.

So whose memory was she looking at?

There's no need to hide anything from me at this point, no?

About that ---

Or I could make guesses at everything instead if you want.

.....

...A major suspect to a robbery murder.

He was killed during the time the warrant was being issued.

A major suspect?

...So she was going through the memory of the killed murderer.

...This makes the 7th one.

7th what?

Including this one, none of them seemed to be the type to kill themselves.

Hm ...

A major suspect committing suicide.

Like having scars that do not point to suicide--- The deaths all rouse suspicion.

In addition, all of the circum-stances are ques-tionable.

And that's when the specialists come in.

I see ...

Everything has been kept to ourselves, so information is only available to the police.

...And who knows about the investiga-tion?

...Is that so.

Needless to say, the media knows nothing.

That's enough. We don't need this one anymore.

...

This is just a corpse.

He is not the reason why Sain-ome won't wake up.

...?

What do you mean?

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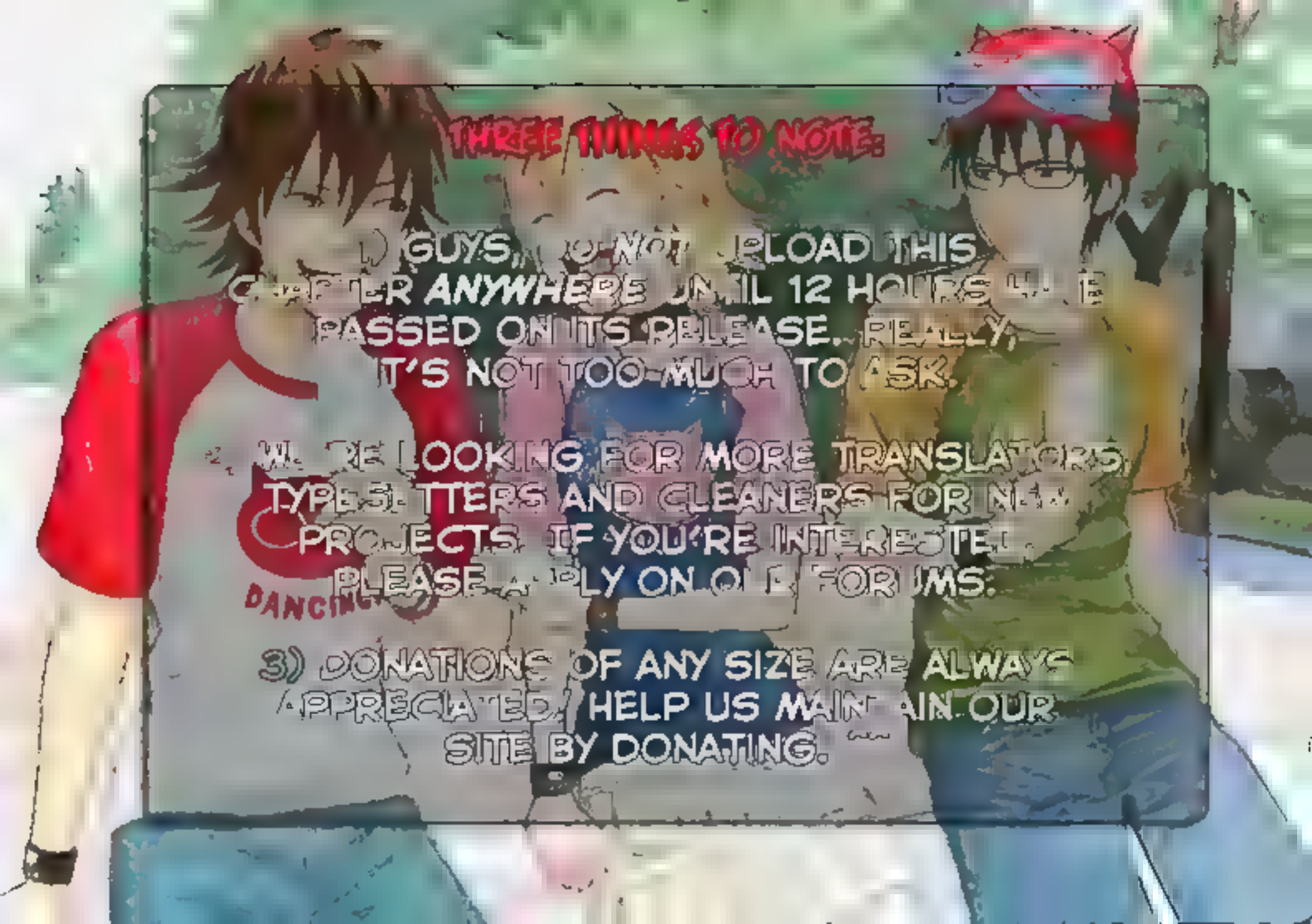
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DANCING

HOW
...

How do you know that---?

It's the reason that Sainome asked for me.

...
Was there anyone at the scene of the murder?

What a potentially troublesome opponent, to have set a trap inside a memory...

Sainome found out about something, and was confined by the criminal.

...I see.

People from our division--- If they find out anything, I would know.

.....

...Now then, what can YOU do?

It's because you have some special powers that you are still here, right?

AH ...

CAN GET INSIDE PEOPLE'S CONSCIOUSNESS BY TOUCHING THEM...

I... I---

That's perfect.

...But it's limited to people who are sleeping or uncon-scious.

Hm ...

.....

There isn't anyone with the same power.

Are there any others in your division who can do this?

That's impos-sible.

Can you retain your consciousness over here while inside the other world?

But rather than doing the hunt-ing, I may be---

It's pos-sible if you touch me directly,

...How about taking me along?

And that's why you didn't go in solo ---

I know.

...

YEAH.

I see ...

No... Not so far.

Have you ever been trapped?

Anything is fine, even a watch or a scrap of paper.

...Is there anything that you treasure?

Rather than memories or intangible things,

It's better to have a physical object here.

HUH ..?

AH... NO.

You must have something.

A gift from your girlfriend, a photo, or---

Alright, let's see it---

.....

ピ ッ

S... STOP ---!!

STOP IT!!

...So it's Sainome.

This will be enough.

IT'S, UM ---!!

TH... THAT'S NOT IT!!

!?

I'M TELLING YOU, IT'S---

...It will point to the path back to the real world...

HUH ..?

It's a charm that's used for bringing you back.

...Here.

It will pull you back to this world.

If you are stuck, then concentrate your thoughts on it.

S... SOMETHING LIKE THAT IS---

Ok, let's begin.

MAGIC ..?

... Believe in it.

It's a simple type of magic.

B... BUT ---

...
AND THE CHANCE OF SUCCESS ---2

While we're talking like this,

Sainome could be in danger you know.

Who knows?

It depends on you.

Let's go.

オ オ オ

...
Found you.

---!!

Of course, since you asked for me.

KUROE ...

I'M GLAD ---

...They are your friends?

.....

What happ- ened?

WELL ---

I see... it's a familiar face.

...So he's the cause.

.....

WHAT DO YOU ---

HUH ..?

You can see?

.....

And I suspected it was an inside job.

Ah?

It's all a decep- tion.

Look.

WHAT KUROE ARE YOU ... ---?

It's him.

...Interesting. To have broken through this illusion...

CHIEF

...

...!?

So don't think you can get out of here and reveal the truth.

This memory is mine.

Useless strug-gle?

It's over. Stop any useless struggle.

N... NO GOOD, IT WON'T OPEN!!

... Open the door.

It's no use...you can't escape this prison.

Of course it won't.

OKITA!!

BELIEVE !!

YOUR POWERS ARE STRONGER!!

HE'S JUST SOMETHING THAT'S FASTENED TO A MEMORY!!

THINK OF THE CHARM!!

It's useless ---

I'M BACK ..?

I...

.....!!

WHERE IS HE!?

AH ...!!

HUH ...!?

...THAT ROOM!!

ト"

ト"

ト"

OKITA !!

!?

WHAT HAPPENED ---!?

...How unex-pected ...

To think that you actually escaped ...

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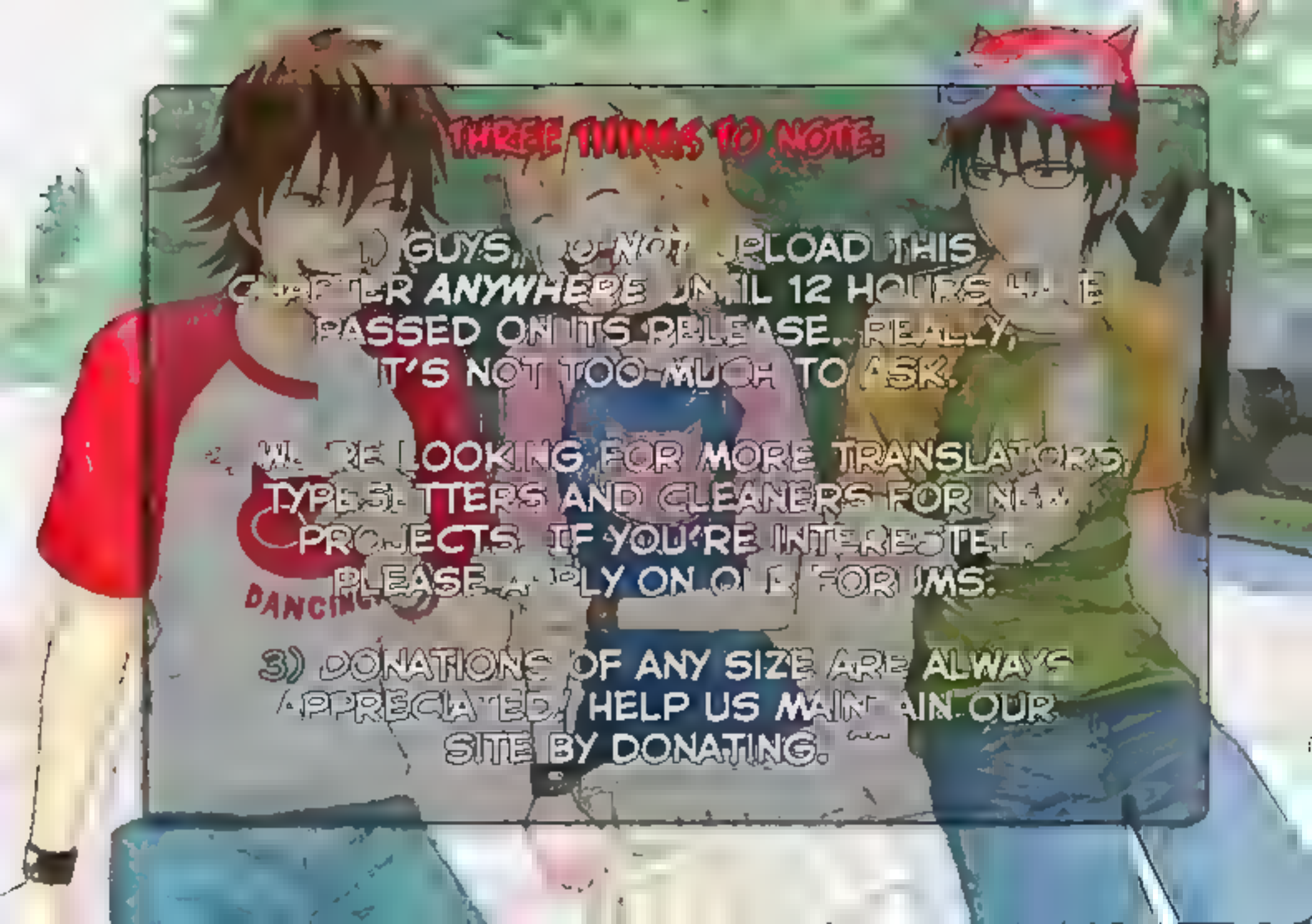
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DANCING

SHINJOU ...SAN?

DID YOU ALSO KILL THE SUSPECTS AND TRAP SAINOME-SAN---?

.....

TO THINK... THAT IT WAS REALLY YOU ---

---!?

...It's as you say. I did all that.

So what?

...?

Don't you think you're directing your anger toward the wrong person?

DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU DID---!?

SO WHAT, YOU SAY ...

All I did was punish them for their crimes,

And prevent future tragedies before they happen.

Just take a look at the deeds of the ones I got rid of.

Are those the actions of human beings?

WHA ...!?

Am I wrong?

You're not getting it.

TO JUDGE... THEM.

Y...YOU SHOULDN'T BE THE ONE...

And there are those who get lucky and are released back to society, without atoning for what they did.

I've been watching the likes of them for a long time... They repeatedly commit crimes like it's just a game.

How can they be anything but evil?

Killing and plundering whomever they please.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS...NO DIFFERENT...

E... EVEN SO,

But I'm different.

Resolution, or morals.

Those people have no faith,

You're wrong.

I have THAT.

BUT JUST BECAUSE YOU---

...!!

...I'm the executor of justice that people wish for.

I'll give it some thought if you would follow me.

Let's see...

To save the woman that you're so worried about.

... BELIEVE IT.

I CAN'T ...

.....

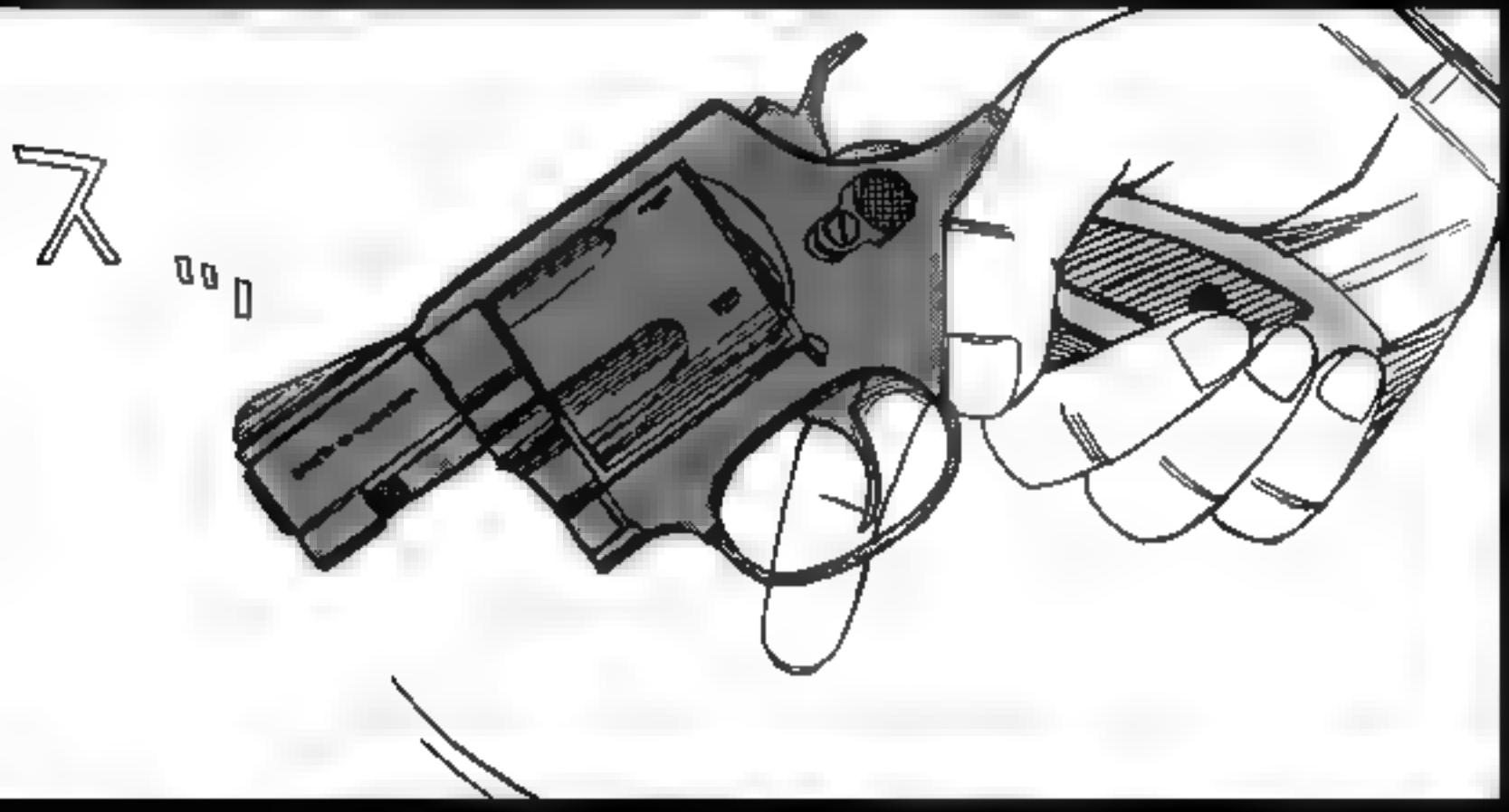
What will you do?

Is that so.

.....

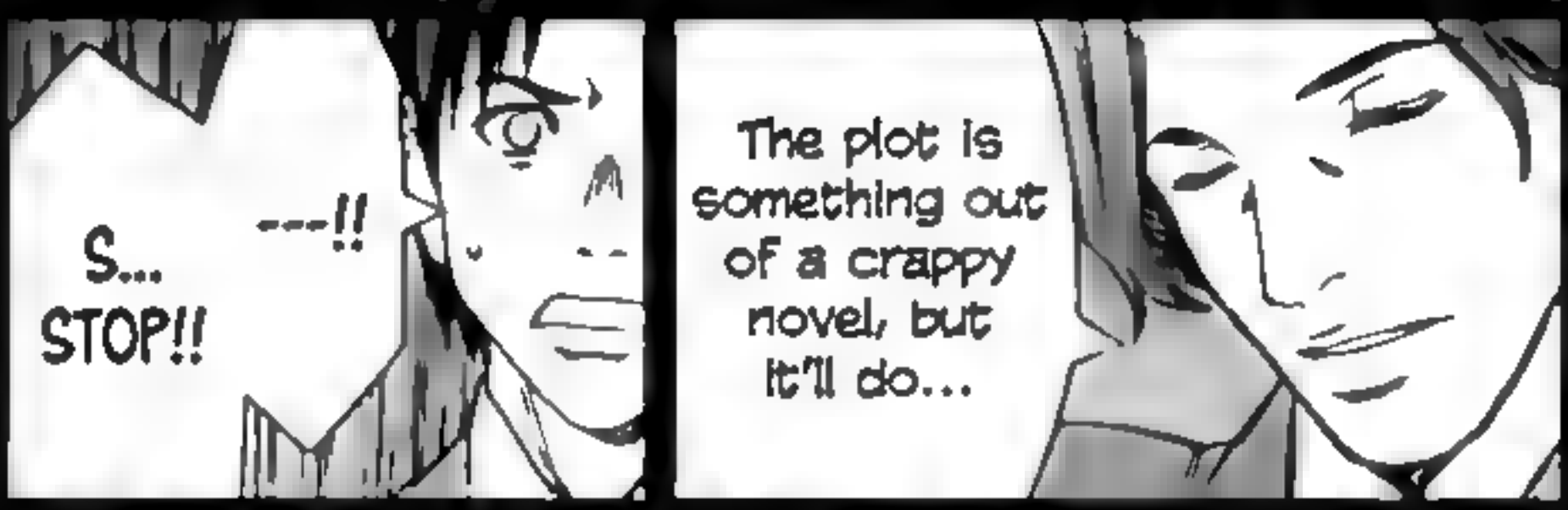
The way you're going about it... is wrong.

...Too bad, but I guess it's time to put an end to this.



WH...
WHAT ARE
YOU---!?

When he comes to, he commits suicide with a pistol.
A confused officer opens fire inside the station.


S...
STOP!!
---!!
The plot is something out of a crappy novel, but it'll do...

Stop?

How do you think I've been getting rid of those criminals?

ス

ﾄﾛﾛ

...!?

You'll be doing it.

It's not me.

ﾄﾟ

ﾅ

...!?

WHAT DID YOU DO---!?

WHA... WHAT!?

Hold it up.

WHAT HAPP-ENED!?

AKITA!?

WHA ....!?

Killing innocent people is...not good.

When the man comes in, you'll shoot him.

I'll open the door now.

I won't dirty my hands.

You're going to do it for me.

---!!

WHAT ABOUT SAINOME-SAN?

WHA ...

She's a hindrance to me...

...!!

Her ability is annoying.

... Same with you.

It's too bad ...

If you trained more, you could have become like me.

We have the same type of ability.

Think about the charm!!

I'll save Sainome!!

This is good-bye---

I'm---

DIFFERENT... FROM YOU.

WHAT WAS THAT ...!?
.....

...Are you al-right?

ゴ

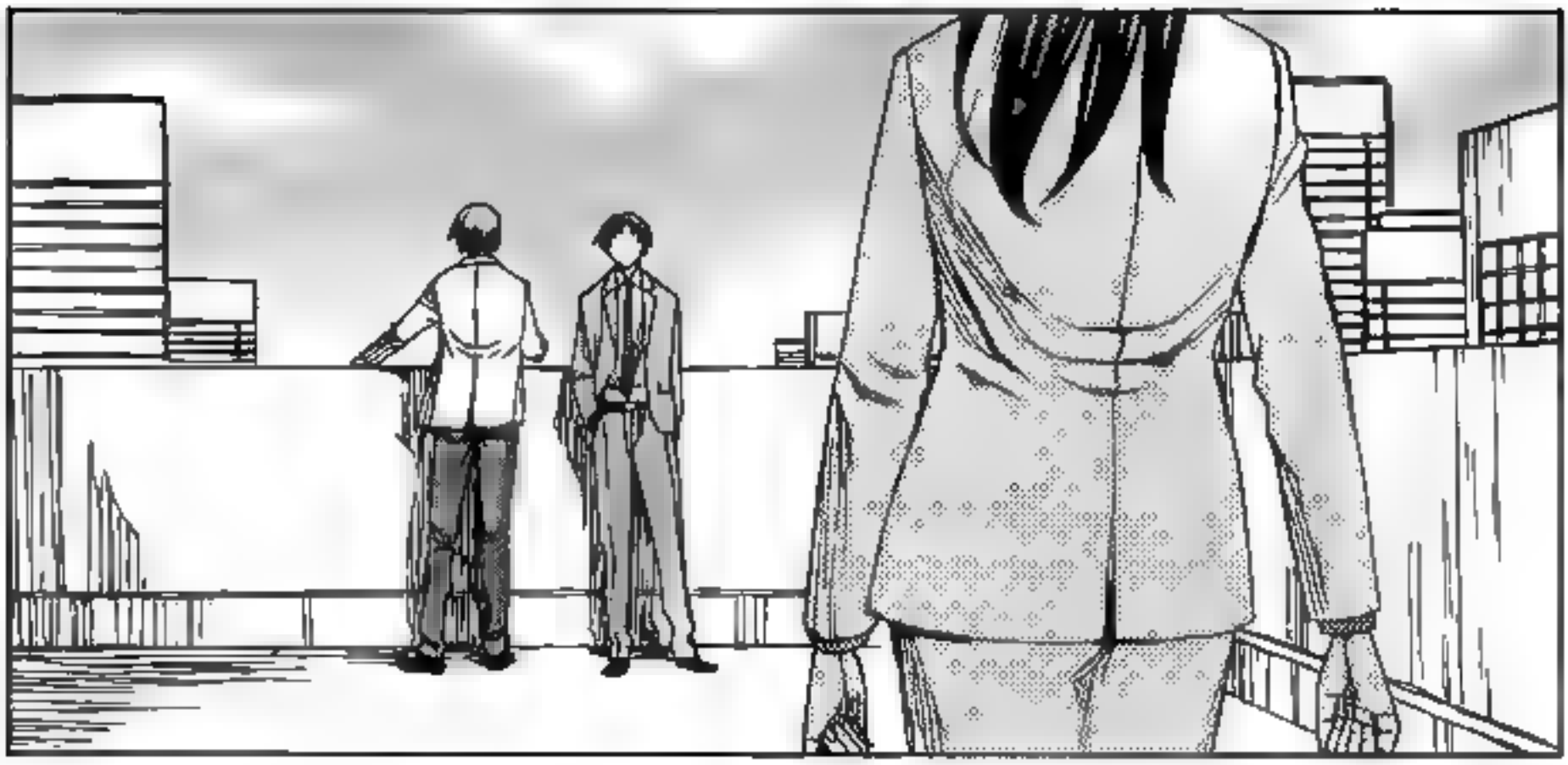
オ

オ

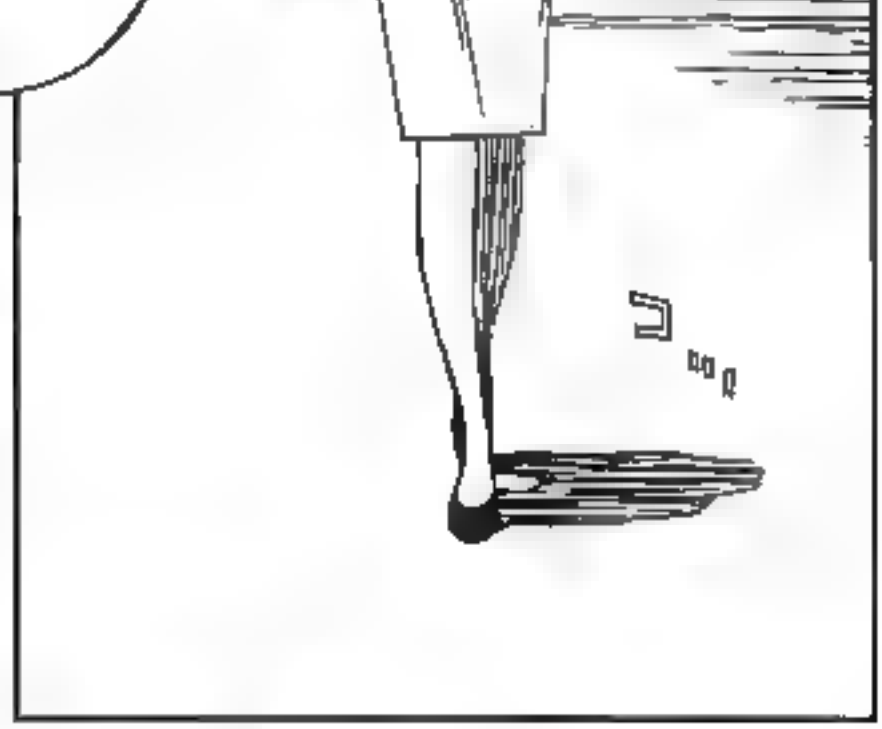
ㅎㅎ

JUST... WHERE DID REALITY END,
AND ILLUSIONS BEGIN---?

THE ACTING CHIEF DISAPPEARED ...
.....



Sainome is back...



But !

But
...

...
Heh.

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Appendix

A Little Snow In The Night

It's snow, Kuroe!!

Wah- snow!!

Look!!

Snow?

I wonder about that...

Even if the snow does, it'll probably melt by noon.

Would it build up?

No wonder it was so cold.

It would be nice if it does...

So it's not going to happen...?

Everything is so quiet, as if everyone is asleep.

A snowy night is so mysteri-ous...

When you open the window at dawn, everything is silver outside.

The snow sparkles in the morning light, and it feels like a completely different world.

Well, there would be less people out too because it's cold.

Everyone outside appears to be strangers ...

.....

I see people falling down while wearing leather shoes or heels.

Even you were happy about snow in the morning when you were young, right?

People become realistic when they become adults.

Geez, you have no emotions even though you're a writer-

悲しいな

I did participate in snowball fights and made snowmen on the way back from school---

I guess ...

I want to make a really big one!!

About the same height as me!!

Snow-man!!

ニンゲンなの

くわっ

Sigh...I really hope there's still some left by the time I wake up.

I guess it's good ...

ふーん

That's a bit...

Not unless you got a snowy place.

.....

Is that so...

Morni...but you're still awake, Kuroe?

Yeah...I have a bit of work.

Morning, Misaki.

A bit built up, but it melted after the sun came out.

WHAT ABOUT THE SNOW!?

OH... THAT'S RIGHT!!

...I'll go get some sleep now.

Good night.

I see. That's too bad ...

Freezer?

...Oh yeah, there's something good in the freezer.

Kuroe ...

fin

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